



**FACULTY MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 4, 2018**  
**Heritage Commons, Samuel Read Hall Building**

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The draft Minutes of the March 7, 2018 Faculty Meeting were approved as written.

**II. Old Business**

None

**III. New Business**

**A. Resolutions of Standing Committees**

None

- B. MOTION:** To replace the graduate Academic Standing policy (p. 206 of the 2017-2018 Academic Catalog) with the proposed new policy. (Submitted by the Graduate Council and the Academic Affairs Committee; presented by Eric Hoffman.)  
*(The proposed language is attached as Appendix A).*

The motion was moved and seconded. Eric Hoffman spoke to the motion. He explained that the current policy is vague and difficult to enforce. The proposed language was approved by the Graduate Council and the Academic Affairs Committee.

The motion to replace the graduate Academic Standing policy with the proposed new policy passed by voice vote.

**IV. Reports**

**A. President**

*The President's written report was distributed via email from the President's Office on April 2, 2018.*

With respect to the Provost search, President Birx noted that there was a high level of interest from all three of the candidates. He is currently in discussions with one of the three. Once an offer has been made and accepted, the next step is a formal approval process by the USNH Board of Trustees. President Birx thanked the members of the Search Committee for their thoughtful and careful deliberations during this important process.

President Birx commented on a recent report posted on the web site of the Plymouth State University chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The report, "Analysis of the Financial Situation of Plymouth State University," by Howard Bunsis, Professor of Accounting, Eastern Michigan University, is dated March 2018. President Birx is concerned that the report indicates that our financial position is more solid than it actually is.

President Birx specifically noted the following. The Discount Rate for FY18 was 35.5% and is 39.0% for FY19. Other USNH institutions are above 40% for their discount rate. We have to remain competitive, but this level of discount is not sustainable. President Birx explained how much a 10% change in the discount rate equates to in lost tuition. The concern is how do we make this up; where will the resources come from? With a reduction in revenue, we have to make decisions regarding resources and where to best allocate them. The operating margin and cash flow ratio are not trending well. New Hampshire ranks last in the nation for state support for higher education on a per capita and per student basis. On a positive note, at 7%, the change in enrollment from 2015 to 2018 for Plymouth State University is the best in the University System of New Hampshire. The number of high school graduates in New Hampshire is projected to decline significantly, -27%, in the next several years, 2012-2032. The overall trend for the Northeast during this same time period is -12.2%.

President Birx noted that given all of these factors, our only hope is to stay the course. The entire University System of New Hampshire is experiencing these challenges.

A professor questioned the difference between the numbers in the AAUP report versus our numbers. Some of this is due to one-time items being put in to the wrong categories. President Birx will have updated financial information to share with faculty in the near future.

It was noted that we have more part-time faculty than full-time faculty. Part-time faculty are much less expensive. In response to a question, President Birx commented that we certainly want to retain faculty. Faculty play a key role in our success. He stressed that we all need to work together.

A faculty member stated that the wording of a recent Separation Incentive Plan (SIP) letter received was demoralizing; the communication was not positive. President Birx replied that the intent is to offer the opportunity in such a way as to provide the University with flexibility and the faculty member with flexibility. Faculty members need to consider if the opportunity makes sense for them.

A faculty member commented that a colleague recently received a letter regarding their immigration status. The letter originated from the US Department of State and is part of an audit of the University System of New Hampshire due to a move to a new computer system. President Birx will follow up on this. He affirmed his support of PSU faculty and staff who are not US citizens.

Questions concerning financial projections and reporting were raised. We are developing an enterprise-wide performance management tool which will be able to provide us with real time data and better projection capabilities. President Birx noted that whenever we do have financial data and results, we communicate this information as soon as we have it.

A faculty member asked about the Lean initiative. Dean Parker explained that Lean has tools to help us design processes for our new organizational structure. She noted that we are in the very early stages of this and are testing online models. We'll start this process with Advising and then work across all areas of the University.

President Birx commented that while we have many challenges, there are also many good things happening at PSU and he is very hopeful about our future.

**B. Academic Deans**

*The report was distributed via email from the Academic Affairs Office on April 3, 2018.*

**C. Principal Policy Making Committees**

*The Academic Technology and Online Education and General Education Committees did not meet in March and therefore have not submitted reports. Committee reports from Academic Affairs, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Welfare, and Graduate Council follow this agenda as Appendices B-E.*

**The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.**

## **APPENDIX A:**

**MOTION:** To replace the graduate Academic Standing policy (p. 206 of the 2017-2018 Academic Catalog) with the proposed new policy.

### **Graduate Academic Standing Policy**

Academic Standing:

An admitted graduate student is in good academic standing when the following conditions are present:

- The student has an academic program grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher •
- The student has no more than one grade of incomplete (IC)

An admitted graduate student is not in good academic standing if either of these conditions is present:

- The student has an academic program grade point average (GPA) below 3.0
- The student has two or more incompletes (IC)

Academic Probation:

Students are in academic probation if their credits and their academic program GPA falls in these ranges:

$\leq 10$  attempted credits 2.66 – 2.99

$\leq 11 - 20$  attempted credits 2.75 – 2.99

$\geq 21$  attempted credits 2.85 – 2.99

Students and their advisors are notified if they are not in good academic standing, and they must develop a corrective plan with their advisor. Students have one calendar year or two consecutive terms to raise their GPA to at least a 3.0. Students may not enroll in more than six credits if they are not in good academic standing. Students with more than one incomplete will be prevented from registering for additional classes until all but one incomplete is resolved.

If the student does not achieve good academic standing within the time frame, dismissal from the degree program will occur. If the student wishes to appeal the dismissal, he or she should do so by submitting an appeal request to the Academic Affairs Committee. After dismissal, should the student want to continue, he or she must reapply and be accepted into the program.

Academic Severance (or Dismissal):

Students are dismissed from their degree program if their credits and their academic program GPA falls in these ranges:

$\leq 10$  attempted credits  $\leq 2.65$

$\leq 11 - 20$  attempted credits  $\leq 2.74$

$\geq 21$  attempted credits  $\leq 2.84$

If the student is dismissed and wishes to appeal the dismissal, he or she should do so by submitting an appeal request to the Academic Affairs Committee. After dismissal, should the student want to continue, he or she must reapply and be accepted into the program.

\*Please note that academic standing may impact financial aid status and veterans' and eligible dependents' receipt of Veteran's educational benefits.

\* Other degree programs may have more stringent policies for maintaining academic standing in their degree program. See individual department program descriptions for further information.

*Approved by Graduate Council March 2018*

*Presented jointly with the Academic Affairs Committee to Full Faculty  
April 2018*

**APPENDIX B:**

**Academic Affairs Committee Report  
April 2018**

With the approval of the Academic Integrity policy update, the Academic Affairs Committee has identified several potential projects to tackle next, namely, continuing to improve our academic integrity policy (addressing withdrawals and remediation), the Warning/Probation/Severance policy, and advising. We will identify what can be accomplished in the remainder of this year and begin to project a path for the next academic year.

Dr. Emma Wright  
Academic Affairs Committee Chair

## APPENDIX C:

### Curriculum Committee Report April 2018

At the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Curriculum Committee completed reviewing and voting on all proposed curricular changes that would impact the 2018-2019 Academic Catalog.

The Committee discussed sending an email to the faculty to solicit Toolkit courses for the summer Bridge program; that email was sent to faculty on March 26.

The Committee also identified summer projects to work on, including preparing guidance for programs changing from 3 to 4 credits.

Toolkit and Project Courses: The committee continues to accept proposals for experimental Toolkit and Project Courses.

#### Meeting Times and Deadlines

Curriculum Committee meetings this academic year will be as follows at the specified location:

- April 20<sup>th</sup> HUB Student Senate Room
  - Deadline: April 9<sup>th</sup> by 11:59:59pm
- May 18<sup>th</sup> HUB Student Senate Room
  - Deadline: May 7<sup>th</sup> 11:59:59pm

The committee conducts voting twice a month. Any proposals requiring discussion will be on the agenda of the first committee meeting after the proposal is submitted. Below is a list of each month's second proposal deadline:

- April 23<sup>rd</sup> by 11:59:59pm

The committee will be voting electronically on all proposals. Only those proposals requiring discussion (as determined by committee members) will be voted on in-person at committee meetings.

Updates to Forms and Procedures Documents: The committee is working to revise curriculum forms and related documentation to align with current administrative structures and account for new opportunities in course offerings.

If you are unsure how to proceed, contact [psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu](mailto:psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu) with your questions.

#### Reminder

Transitioning to Four-Credit Model The committee welcomes proposals for program changes to the four-credit model. The committee has developed the following guidelines for departments as they prepare proposals:

- The overall degree requirements must remain at 120
- The requirement for a *minimum* of 15 free elective credits remains in effect
- The degree program should not increase in size (number of required credits.)

**The information below was sent in an email from the Curriculum Committee Chair on January 31<sup>st</sup>.**

Curriculum Procedures:

- Procedures: Please submit one electronic file (PDF) to [psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu](mailto:psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu) for each proposal with all of the following included/attached:
  - Complete Curriculum Proposal Form;
  - All required votes and signatures;
  - Email communications from librarians and ITS;
  - Email communications with other departments/programs if required;
  - Syllabus and other supporting documentation if required. Syllabi must meet the requirements indicated on the syllabus checklist.
    - The syllabus checklist is available at the link below. *Be sure to use the newest ADA and Academic Integrity statements in your syllabi.* The checklist has not yet been updated to the newest statements because of recent changes for the Spring 2018 semester:  
<https://www.plymouth.edu/committee/faculty/files/2010/08/PSU-Syllabus-checklist-Appvd-06Feb2012.pdf>

All of the above must be submitted in a single PDF with an identifying file name.

- Policies:
  - Clarifications and minor changes to proposals are acceptable during the approval process.
  - When a department/program/cluster has one or more items on the agenda, a representative should plan to attend the committee meeting. If a proposal passes by online vote, attendance will not be necessary.
- Proposal Forms: The most recent Curriculum Change and New Course Proposal forms, approved in August 2015, are available at the following link: <https://campus.plymouth.edu/faculty-governance/committees-and-appointed-groups/curriculum-committee/> as is the updated Experimental Course Proposal form. The newest forms will be available at the link above as they are ready. Please use this link to retrieve the most current forms instead of using older ones you may have saved elsewhere.
- Questions: If you are unsure how to proceed with curriculum changes, contact [psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu](mailto:psu-curriculum-chair@plymouth.edu) with your questions.

## APPENDIX D:

### Faculty Welfare Committee Report April 2018

On March 9, the Faculty Welfare Committee met with Cluster representatives from:

- Tourism, Environment and Sustainable Development
- Education, Democracy and Social Change
- Arts and Technology
- Justice and Security
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The main aim of the meeting was to receive feedback from the clusters about particular needs or perceived needs for Faculty Welfare actions as we transition into Cluster management modes. Those who attended shared with the group their Cluster's organizational structure and status of implementation. Discussion points included workload distribution in and across clusters as regards PSU service courses, workload non-equivalencies for graduate and undergraduate advising and instruction, research release distribution as Centers are reorganized, and concept of a standardized rubric to guide work plan evaluation.

Promotion and tenure processes, concerns and ideas were also shared by the cluster representatives, including how cluster engagement will be credited and weighted in the P&T process going forward. We recognize that junior faculty, especially those coming up for tenure consideration during this transition, are under exceptional and ongoing stress because of the current, somewhat nebulous status of the P&T process. This will be somewhat but not fully ameliorated with the conclusion of AAUP negotiations. Unresolved issues include:

- need for a specific date for the annual P&T workshop since P&T applications are due in mid-April;
- clarity on selection criteria for P&T Chairs and Committee members, especially for programs already transitioned into clusters and for programs without clear Cluster affiliation (i.e. library faculty);
- clarity on the signatory recommendation process for faculty no longer served by a Chair and after the Dean positions are vacated.

The Faculty Welfare Committee heard feedback from those present that continued sharing of ideas and concerns via the FWC would be useful. We also hope to hear from those Clusters that were not represented at this initial gathering.

Respectfully,  
Lisa Doner, Chair Faculty Welfare Committee

## **APPENDIX E:**

### **Graduate Council April 2018**

The Graduate Council held its seventh meeting of the year on March 26, 2018 in room 109 of the HUB. The minutes from our February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted without the need for correction.

Jen Boutin from Admissions shared the efforts being conducted by the Admissions Department to recruit graduating undergraduates into graduate programs. She also shared that the application fee for all alumni and current students has been waived.

Several members of the Registrar's Office participated in the meeting. Tonya LaBrosse reviewed and explained the language changes that she was requesting for the Academic Standing Policy. The revised policy will be brought forward by the Grad Council and Academic Affairs Committee to the full faculty at the April faculty meeting. Considerable discussion was had regarding the implementation of Degree Works and a uniquely graduate program issue, individualization of programs of study. Another extensive conversation was held around how students who have been academically dismissed or who have been severed for inactivity are readmitted. Due to the nature and potential policy implications for both issues subgroups will be developed to discuss these issues and make recommendations for policy and/or processes.

A subgroup of the council presented a draft "letter" to campus leaders regarding the authentic integration of graduate programs into the cluster model. The letter will be presented to cabinet at an upcoming meeting. It will be distributed to the full faculty after the meeting with the cabinet.

Finally, per the Graduate Council By-laws the election for next year's chair was held. Dr. Clarissa Uttley has been elected to that position and I will work with her to ensure a smooth transition.

Respectfully submitted to the faculty,  
Linda L. Carrier, Ed.D.  
Graduate Council Chair